Vol. 3 No. 3 July - September 1998

SMARA UPDATE

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Department of Conservation - Office of Mine Reclamation

SMGB Assumes SMARA Review Authority for Nine Lead Agencies

In January of this year the board began its review of all lead agency mining ordinances adopted prior to 1991, to ensure they reflected the changes made to SMARA since the enactments of AB 3551, AB 3909 and AB 1506. The board determined that 68 lead agencies had ordinances that were deficient and required updating.

Owing to the large number of deficient ordinances, the board split the lead agencies into two groups. Lead agencies with ordinances adopted in 1981 were assigned to group one and notified last May of the deficiencies in their ordinance. They were notified to submit a revised ordinance within 90 days to the board for review, pursuant to Section 2774.5 of the Public Resources Code. Of the 31 lead agencies in group one, Madera and Mendocino Counties and the Cities of Arcadia, Bakersfield, Colma, Oakland, Richmond, Rolling Hills Estates and Santa Paula failed to submit a revised ordinance within the 90-day period.

As a result, the board assumed authority to review and approve any new reclamation plan and plan amendments that may be submitted to these local jurisdictions. This will remain in effect until such time as they have adopted a new

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SMGB Assumes SMARA Review Authority for Nine

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Mine Safety and Hazard Recognition Workshops Scheduled

The Office of Mine Reclamation is coordinating with the California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) to conduct three one-day training sessions on mine safety and hazard recognition. A member of Cal/OSHA's Mining and Tunneling Unit who is a certified safety trainer will teach the training sessions.

The sessions will be geared to meet the needs of lead agency inspectors and comply with the safety training requirements of both the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and Cal/OSHA. A certificate from Cal/OSHA will be issued to all participants upon completion of the training session.

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Mine Safety and Hazard

Lead Agencies

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mining ordinance that is in accordance with SMARA (as amended) and the board's regulations, and is certified by the board. These lead agencies retain their permitting authority and their inspection and enforcement responsibilities during the board's limited jurisdiction.

The board notified the remaining 37 agencies in group two of their deficient ordinances in mid-September. To avoid losing their reclamation plan review authority, these agencies should prepare and submit a draft of their revised ordinance to the board within 90 days of receiving the board's notice. If, after its review, the board finds that a revised ordinance remains deficient, the lead agency will be given an additional 90 days to submit a revised draft to the board. Once the board determines an ordinance complies with SMARA, the lead agency may adopt the ordinance and submit it to the board for certification.

Questions regarding the ordinance review process may be directed to the State Mining and Geology Board at (916) 322-1082 or at their e-mail address, smgb@consrv.ca.gov.

New Surety Bond Forms Now In Place

As promised, new model surety bond forms were approved and made available to all lead agencies in early July. Along with these forms, lead agencies should also have received the latest version of the State Mining and Geology Board's financial assurance guidelines which were amended to adopt the new forms as well as to make several minor corrections.

The new bond forms offer significant changes from the form previously found in the board's guidelines. These changes include: 1) the new forms are specific to the type of business the principal operates (i.e., a corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship), and to the property being bonded; 2) language was added to increase the prospect of a successful litigation should it become necessary to enforce the bond through court proceedings; 3) a hold harmless clause and payment of reasonable attorney fees is now included; and 4) the 120-day cancellation clause was omitted to defer to existing civil code which provides for a 30-day cancellation period.

Having been adopted as regulation, these forms are unique to the other types of acceptable financial assurance mechanisms in that their use is mandatory for those operators wishing to use a surety bond to meet their financial assurance obligation under SMARA. The effective date of the forms was July 1, 1998; however a one-year grace period was established to allow operators with existing surety bonds time to substitute those bonds with the new forms. Old bond forms will become unacceptable on July 1, 1999. During this grace period lead agencies should require the use of the new forms for any operations that are newly permitted or when existing bonds come due for renewal or need amendment.

To help in the transition to the new forms, they are available in electronic format from this office by request. Any questions regarding the forms should be directed to Andrew Rush at (916) 323-9198.

Andrew Rush,
Environmental Specialist III

New Head of OMR Appointed

The Department of Conservation is pleased to announce the hiring of Glenn Stober as the new Assistant Director for the Office of Mine Reclamation effective Monday, October 5th. He replaces Dennis O'Bryant who has taken a position at CALFED (Bay-Delta Program) working on long-range environmental and program planning.

Glenn brings a wealth of management experience with him to the position. For the last eight years, Glenn has managed economic development programs at the Trade and Commerce Agency (TCA) that have included: TeamCalifornia, Main Street, the Rural Development Council, the Job Creation Investment Fund, the California Economic Development Financing Authority, the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank, the Public Real Estate Program, and earthquake recovery programs. Previously, he served in the Office of Planning and Research from 1985-1990 where he worked on environmental and intergovernmental programs regarding CEQA. Implementing SMARA is a partnership between local lead agencies, the State Mining and Geology Board and OMR, and Glenn brings extensive experience working with local governments to the position. In addition, he brings strong common sense problem-solving abilities to the office, which will be valuable as we continue our efforts to encourage all mine operators to come into full compliance with SMARA.

The department is very pleased to have Glenn on board.

Governor Signs SB 1664

With Governor Wilson's signing of SB 1664, California gained a greater level of assurance that sufficient funding will be available for mine reclamation projects in the event a mine operator does not complete site reclamation.

The new law specifies that surety bonds written for the purpose of complying with SMARA be underwritten by an admitted surety insurer. As of February 13, 1998 (the introduction date of the bill) personal sureties written by private individuals are no longer acceptable, and those approved after that date will become invalid when the law takes effect on January 1, 1999.

However, for mine operators who had approved financial assurances secured by personal sureties prior to February 13, 1998, the personal surety can remain a valid instrument until and unless the amount of the financial assurance changes. Financial assurances are required to be reviewed annually, and the amount may be adjusted to account for new lands disturbed, inflation or areas that have been reclaimed.

SB 1664 reduces the likelihood of court actions taken to collect funds to pay for reclamation projects. The bill also protects local governments and the state from the possibility that no real, liquid assets exist to perform reclamation.

Oops!

When identifying the 1997 SMARA lead agency award winners in the last issue of the SMARA Update, we inadvertently omitted the names of two of our repeat winners – Del Norte and Ventura Counties. C*ongratulations*, to both of these counties! We appreciate their continuing commitment to implementing the requirements of SMARA.

Message from the Director

Larry

There are several SMARA policy issues the Department of Conservation has either revisited recently or to which the department will give increased scrutiny in the coming months. First is our mine inspection policy, second is our "good faith" offers to out-of-compliance mines, and third is the matter of non-compliant mines operated by local government agencies.

We needed to modify slightly our mine inspection policy to avoid a repeat of a legal dispute over access rights. The matter of non-compliant mines is, as always, one of ensuring a level playing field for all operators. In three nutshells, here are the details:

Inspection Policy -- State law is clear that Office of Mine Reclamation staff have the right to enter mine property to inspect the site. However, as a result of a mine operator using the language in the policy to keep inspectors off his property, we had to make a modification to the policy.

Let me be clear: There is no change in the practice staff will follow. The department maintains a strong desire to provide all mine operators 10 days notice prior to an inspection. Nevertheless, there are rare occasions when the protection of health and safety or the environment may necessitate less than 10 days notice, and the department cannot have an internal policy document used as the legal basis for refusing staff access. In all other circumstances, OMR staff will follow the 10-day rule.

Good Faith -- Earlier this summer, the department ended the practice of providing time for mine operators to come into compliance with SMARA when violations were discovered. Six years after SMARA was revised to allow for penalties, the time has now passed for any new offers of good faith by the department. Mines currently under a good faith timetable will be allowed to continue, but penalties will follow if they don't keep to their schedule.

Those mines that have been complying with the law have been operating at a competitive disadvantage with those mines that are not in compliance. It is time for that to end. The department recognizes there are costs associated with SMARA compliance, but six years is more than enough time for an operator to get there.

City/County Compliance -- There are a number of local agencies that operate their own mines out of compliance with SMARA. They have been given several warnings to comply or cease operations. Again, it is unfair to private operators who have been in compliance to see a government agency not comply, and then not buy the private operator's product because they can get it cheaper from their own illegal operation. The department will begin to issue closure orders against those agencies that are operating illegal mines and pits. It is incumbent upon government agencies to set the example for compliance, rather than flout laws with which we insist others must comply.

It is my sincere hope that by implementing these policies clearly and consistently, the department will spur compliance with minimal need for enforcement measures. Cooperation among the department, local lead agencies and the mining community will allow us to reach the mutual goals of resource availability, business success and environmental preservation.

Reclamation Tips

Ecological Restoration and the "R" Words

Ecological restoration is a concept that has been around for centuries as indigenous people replaced the plants that gave them sustenance. For 100 years beginning in the mid-1800's, prominent planners designed parks in cosmopolitan areas, such as New York City's Central Park, that attempted to imitate natural landscapes. What is now regarded as the first organized attempt at "restoration" began in 1934 at the University of Wisconsin, where faculty bought degraded farmland and replanted plants that represented the former "prairie" landscape. This has become part of the University of Wisconsin's Arboretum.

Now, restoration as a science has emerged on college campuses in degree programs as well as in the professional realm of landscaping, farming and forestry. With the incredible loss of natural landscapes due to human activity as well as natural disaster, ecological restoration takes on a new importance. As Aldo Leopold, naturalist, wrote in 1934, "The time has come for science to busy itself with the earth itself. The first step is to construct a sample of what we had to start with." This article describes some of the often confusing and seemingly similar terms that describe the many facets of ecological restoration.

The "R" words: "restoration," "reclamation" and "revegetation" are often used interchangeably, causing confusion among regulators and practitioners. These terms have different definitions. Each "R" word describes a specific method of returning the land to an end use. The words used to describe a project will help shape the goals and outcome of that project. Definitions of these "R" words, as well as words with similar meanings, follow:

Revegetation -- Revegetation is a broad term that describes establishing vegetation on disturbed lands. The goal of revegetation can be erosion control, landscaping and/or habitat creation. When an area is revegetated it means that the area has been planted with plants that may or may not be what was growing there before. Native plant species must be used when revegetating mined-lands, unless precluded by the end use. For example, when the end use is a golf course, the site is *revegetated* with turf grass.

Reclamation --This term refers to improving the conditions on a severely degraded site, usually disturbed by surface-mining, and minimizing the adverse environmental effects while returning the land to a beneficial end use. SMARA establishes legislation that provides guidelines for reclamation. Gravel pits are often reclaimed to ponds that serve as wildlife habitat.

Restoration -- Restoration is the process of intentionally altering a site to establish a defined, indigenous, historic ecosystem. The goal of this process is to emulate the structure, function, diversity and dynamics of the specified ecosystem. Restoration is the most widely misused term. To restore a site means that you are reestablishing the original landscape with its physical and biological components. This process is very difficult because the undisturbed ecosystem is a delicate balance of plants, soil, microbes and wildlife. In California, much work has been done in restoring riparian areas (those areas along rivers and creeks). Riparian restoration is a process that replaces the hydrology, river morphology, soils, and vegetation of the original system in an attempt to fully emulate the predisturbed condition.

Ecological Restoration and the "R" Words

Landscaping -- Landscaping is a term that refers to the

Executive Officer's Report

At its May 14, 1998, regularly scheduled business meeting held in San Diego, the board took the following actions on these SMARA issues:

1. Approved a Request for Exemption from SMARA under Public Resources Code Section 2714(f) by the Faria Family Partnership, Ventura County, to sell stockpiled rocks that had accumulated on their farmland over several years because of tilling and replanting. The purpose of the rock removal was to provide additional space for orchard tree planting.

2. Adopted Resolution 98-03 certifying the City of San Marcos' Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance, Chapter 20.124 of the Municipal Code, as meeting the minimum requirements of SMARA.

3. Adopted Resolution 98-04 addressing "substantial deviation" as it occurs in SMARA. The board recommended that because the definition of what constitutes a substantial deviation may vary on a case by case basis, it should be left to the authority of the lead agency to determine the criteria for a substantial deviation from an approved reclamation plan.

4. Approved findings by the policy committee that 31 SMARA lead agencies (15 counties and 16 cities) with mining ordinances adopted in 1981 have ordinances that are no longer in accordance with current SMARA. The board authorized the executive officer to notify these lead agencies of the deficiencies of their ordinances pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 2774.5. According to SMARA, these lead agencies must respond with revisions to their ordinances within 90 days, or loose their authority to approve reclamation plans until they produce a State Mining and Geology Board certified ordinance. The board is scheduled to review an additional 46 lead agency ordinances adopted prior to 1991 at its September meeting.

5. Approved a proposal by the Division of Mines and Geology for a five-year plan for the classification and designation of mineral resources as provided for under Public Resources Code Section 2761.

The board took the following actions regarding appeals of administrative penalties assessed by the Department of Conservation:
A. Farming Camp / California Valley Mine, ID #91-40-0049/50; Darrell Twisselman, Agent; San Luis Obispo County, in the original amount of $20,000 for failure to have reclamation plans and financial assurances for both sites. The board upheld the penalty amount, but modified the penalty's application to immediate payment of $10,000, and the remaining $10,000 if an approved reclamation plan is not provided by mid-August, 1998. This is in accordance with a timetable for approval suggested by the county. If the county approves the reclamation plan by the August deadline, the remaining $10,000 amount will be waived.

John G. Parrish, Ph.D.
Executive Officer

The Abandoned Mine Lands Unit now has a toll free number for the public to use to report abandoned mines. If you know of or find an abandoned mine please call:

1-877-OLD MINE

Entering abandoned mines is dangerous. Don't become a statistic. Remember:

Stay out and stay alive!

manipulation of the ecosystem for cultural values such as aesthetics and recreational access. For example, landscaping refers to placing shade trees in a newly created housing development.

Reforestation -- Reforestation is the process of planting an area with tree species that yield certain wood products. Areas that have been logged or burned are reforested with specific trees such as pine or Douglas fir that can be logged in the future.

Enhancement -- Enhancement is a process that improves an already existing ecosystem for a specific value, such as water quality or wildlife habitat. Wetlands that have been degraded by grazing are commonly enhanced by excluding grazing, decompacting and planting wetland vegetation.

Creation -- Creation refers to establishing a historical ecosystem on lands that did not previously support that ecosystem (or on severely altered sites). Vernal pools are often referred to as being created. It is controversial whether created ecosystems, such as vernal pools, have the same functional values as their undisturbed counterparts. Some experts contend that created vernal pools over time will not have the same function, vegetation or invertebrates that are found in natural vernal pools.

These words define the method and end use of the area that is going to be repaired. Used correctly, these words can assist in communicating the strategy used to repair a disturbed site.

The goal of a project can be simply to revegetate the site to control erosion or, with much more effort, to restore the site to a preexisting ecosystem. The processes and methods to be used to attain these two different goals will be different and need to be considered at the onset.

While a few sites that have been minimally disturbed will recover quickly and adequately by natural processes without any human intervention, revegetation is necessary in most circumstances. Natural reinvasion of a site may take years, during which the disturbed site may erode. Erosion may decrease the capability of the site to support vegetation, continue to degrade visual quality, habitat, and increase dust pollution.

Disturbed lands can also cause significant off-site impacts such as increased sedimentation and air pollution, and can act as a noxious weed repository. Regardless of the level of revegetation being attempted on a site, most projects strive to achieve the underlying goal of a self-sustaining vegetative cover of native species that protects a site from wind and water erosion.

Karen Wiese,
Plant Ecologist

OMR Geologist and Syar Industries Team Up to Teach Students About Geology

Cathy Gaggini, a geologist with the Reclamation Unit in OMR, volunteered some of her time recently to participate in a field trip for 80 eighth grade students to Syar Industries, Inc.'s Lake Hermon Quarry. Syar Industries is one of Northern California's largest producers of construction building materials and routinely sponsors such field trips as part of its community outreach program. During the tour, Cathy gave a lecture on the geology of the basalt quarry, explaining how metamorphic pillow basalts develop. The students also learned about the many roles minerals play in our society and the importance of mine reclamation in protecting the environment.

Inspection Workshop is a Great Success!

The Mine Inspection and Cost Estimating Workshop held in late July was a big hit with workshop participants. The workshop was well attended with 35 participants representing 20 counties, 4 cities, 2 operators, 2 consultants and 1 member of the State Mining and Geology Board. Topics covered during the first day included minimum inspection requirements, tips on preparing for and conducting inspections, personal safety, and inspection techniques for slope stability, erosion control, revegetation and habitat restoration.

The highlight of the workshop was the field trip to Santa Fe Aggregates' Waterford Plant located adjacent to the Tuolumne River. Four field stations were located throughout the mine site where workshop participants learned different aspects of conducting an inspection and monitoring reclamation. Station one was located on a bluff above the operation giving a visual overview of the entire operation. At station two, Tim Kustic and Cam Downey helped participants conduct practical field exercises using a Brunton compass and clinometer to measure slope angles, bearings and heights.

Tim Kustic illustrates how to use a Brunton compass

Mike Sandecki illustrated typical erosion and slope stability problems and how to resolve them at station three.

Mike Sandecki discusses river processes with workshop participants

Capitalizing on the proximity of

the Tuolumne River, Mike also discussed river processes, pointing out some of the common oversights made in the planning process when dealing with projects adjacent to river systems. Participants conducted a line transect and used a meter square with MaryAnn Showers at station four, learning how to measure vegetative cover, density and species-richness.

Returning from the field trip, the workshop concluded with presentations from Andrew Rush on cost estimating and financial assurance mechanisms, including a discussion on the new surety bond forms.

MaryAnn Showers runs a line transect

A certificate of appreciation was awarded to Bill Brown of Santa Fe Aggregates for volunteering

his site for the field trip and assisting OMR staff with the workshop.

Bill Brown recieves a certificate of appreciation from Andrew Rush

The success of this workshop was due in large part to the ability of participants to visit an active mining operation and conduct field exercises. We have had several requests for another inspection workshop and are looking for an operator willing to accommodate the field trip aspect of the workshop. Any operators interested in volunteering their site are asked to contact Andrew Rush at (916) 323-9198.

Mine Safety During SMARA Inspections

An active mining operation can be a dangerous place, especially if you are not familiar with the site and activities occurring there. State and federal regulations require that mine operators provide three days of mine safety and hazard recognition training to all new employees before they start in their positions. Operators are also required to maintain a comprehensive Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) which includes annual refresher training. In fact, mine safety is so important to the industry that several of the mining associations give annual safety awards to their member companies who have maintained an exemplary safety record throughout the year.

The reason for all this attention to safety should be obvious; one minor trip could turn into a major fall. According to statistics kept by the Department of Labor, Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), there were 329 non-fatal reportable accidents (accidents requiring treatment beyond first aid) and six fatal accidents at metal and non-metal surface mines in California during 1997. Many of these accidents involved earth moving equipment and machinery, but were also the result of material collapses, explosives and falls. Despite these real hazards, many lead agencies send staff who have had little to no mine safety and hazard recognition training to conduct annual SMARA inspections.

This article provides some safety tips to keep in mind when conducting annual SMARA inspections; however, lead agencies should begin providing their inspection staff with adequate training in hazard recognition and mine safety. This training will be made available to lead agencies free of charge by OMR in the next two months (see article entitled "Mine Safety and Hazard Recognition Workshops Scheduled" in this edition). In addition, the California Mining Association (CMA) is sponsoring an industrial hygiene symposium (covering mine safety and hazard recognition) on December 9th in Sacramento. Persons interested in attending the symposium may contact the association at (916) 447-1977.

Mine safety begins before you even step onto the mine site. All inspectors should be equipped with basic personal safety equipment including an ANSI certified hard hat, steel toe boots, safety glasses, ear plugs and a high visibility vest. For transportation, a well-maintained four-wheel drive vehicle outfitted with an emergency kit (including a shovel, rope, blanket, flashlight, fire extinguisher, first aid kit, jack, tire blocks and extra food and water) should be used. Inspectors should also be furnished with a cellular phone or two-way radio to ensure communication with the office (checking in during the day is good practice) or emergency services should the need arise. Finally, the route the inspector will be taking and the estimated time of return should be left with a supervisor in the office.

When entering a mine site to conduct the inspection, remember that the operator shares responsibility for your safety. Unless a rendezvous point is agreed upon prior to the inspection, always check in at the main office to announce your presence before conducting your review. Some operators may require that visitors read and sign a brief notice informing them of the potential hazards on-site. Many often require that an attendant accompany the inspector during the inspection. Once the inspection begins, keep the following points in mind:

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Mine Safety During SMARA Inspections

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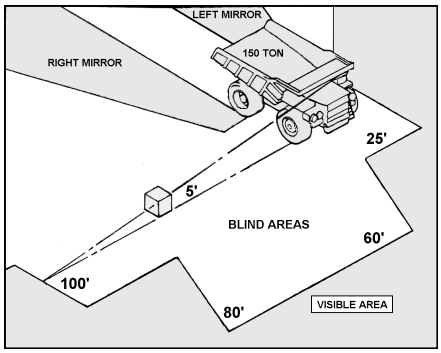
-Wear your seat belt and drive with caution. Follow all traffic signs and yield the right-of-way to large earth moving or hauling equipment. Take note of the traffic pattern, as it is not uncommon for mine sites to have traffic rules that differ substantially from common driving practices. For example, some operations require driving on the left side of the roadway.

-Keep a safe distance behind haul trucks (some have blind spots up to 100 feet away from the vehicle) and drive according to the road conditions (slow down on muddy, icy or dusty roads). Never park behind or in the blind spot of a large truck or piece of equipment. Also, listen and be alert for back-up alarms.

-When parking on a slope, turn wheels into the bank, place the vehicle in park and set the parking brake.

-When entering an area that has



been revegetated, look for erosion and ground movement (sloughing or separation) and avoid those areas. Be watchful for snakes and vegetation that is a skin irritant (i.e. poison oak or stinging nettle). Also, check clothing and exposed skin areas for ticks after walking through thick underbrush.

-Never park or walk adjacent to a highwall. There could be activity above or the wall could fail.

-Avoid walking on tailings or waste impoundments, they may act as quicksand. Never walk along the edge of waste rock dumps, dirt or muck piles, or mined benches. Their edges are very unstable and may collapse under your weight.

-Use caution when inspecting the base of waste dumps and product piles. Large rocks and debris can become dislodged and fall down these slopes.

-Be aware of processing equipment and their moving parts. Loose clothing should not be worn around conveyor belts and machinery. Eye and ear protection should be worn when inspecting processing areas.

-Observe and follow the instructions on blasting signs. Familiarize yourself with the operation's warning signals before and after a blast. Do not enter blasting areas during lightning storms and always turn off two-way radios when entering a blast zone. Gases from incomplete ignition during a blast are unhealthy. Do not reenter a blast area until the "all clear" signal has been given.

-Keep a safe distance from drilling rigs and be careful not to step in drill holes.

-Never enter old mine shafts, adits or structures. Abandoned mine shafts and adits may contain poisonous snakes as well as methane, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide gases that can render you unconscious and kill you in minutes. Remember to stay out and stay alive!

When finished with the inspection, report back to the operation's office before leaving the mine site.

Andrew Rush,
Environmental Specialist III

Compliance Corner

SMARA Annual Inspections

Editor's Note: The following is part one of a three-part series on conducting annual SMARA inspections. This article is excerpted from the material provided at the inspection and cost estimating workshop conducted last July.

Part I: Minimum Inspection Requirements

The following minimum inspection requirements are all found in Section 2774(b) of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act:

- The purpose of the inspection is to determine whether the operation is in compliance with SMARA. This includes inspecting the mining operation's compliance with the use permit (unless the operation is vested as defined in Section 2776) as well as the reclamation plan.

- The lead agency must inspect each surface mining operation at least once every calendar year.

- The operator is solely responsible for the reasonable cost of the inspection.

- The lead agency may cause the inspection to be conducted by a state-registered geologist, state-registered civil engineer, state-licensed landscape architect, or state-registered forester, who is experienced in land reclamation and who has not been employed by the operator during the preceding 12 months.

- The "Surface Mining Inspection Report" form must be used (Form MRRC-1).

- Within 30 days of completion of the inspection, the lead agency is required to submit the completed inspection report form to the Department of Conservation and notify the department of the status of the operation's compliance with SMARA as well as any aspect(s) of non-compliance. The notice should also indicate if the operation's reclamation plan, financial assurance or interim management plan (if appropriate) is pending a review by the lead agency or if the operation has an appeal pending before the lead agency or State Mining and Geology Board.

- The lead agency must send a copy of the inspection report and any supporting documentation to the operator.

- The operator must send a copy of the inspection report to the Department of Conservation with their next annual report.

Tim Kustic,
Principal Compliance Engineer

Recognition Workshops Scheduled

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The sessions are scheduled to occur in Redding on October 7th, Sacramento on October 22nd, and in Anaheim on November 18th. This training is designed to meet California's General Industry Safety Orders (Title 8, Subchapter 7, Section 3200 et al of the California Code of Regulations) which require every employer develop and maintain an effective Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP). The requirements of an IIPP include identifying and evaluating work place hazards and providing the necessary training to ensure that employees comply with safe and healthy work practices. Because active mining operations present unique hazards, specialized training should be provided to individuals expected to conduct SMARA inspections.

We urge lead agencies to send their SMARA inspection staff to one of these free training sessions. Space is limited so early registration is recommended. Interested individuals may contact Andrew Rush at (916) 323-9198 to register.

The *SMARA Update* is a quarterly publication of the Department of Conservation's Office of Mine Reclamation, 801 K Street, MS 09-06, Sacramento, California 95814, (916) 323-9198, http://www.consrv.ca.gov/omr/index.html. The purpose of this publication will be that of imparting the latest in reclamation tips, as well as changes in legislation or interpretation of existing statutes by court decisions.

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